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under his leadership. On another occasion a similar scene took place, but this time the orchestra were beyond measure enraged, and persisted in refusing to play under the guidance of Beethoven; so that, desirous of hearing the rehearsal of his piece, and yet compelled not to be present, he was obliged to remain in the ante-room. It was a long time before this quarrel could be made up.

The capricious and peevish nature of Beethoven's character was noticed by all with whom he came into contact, and was the source of great trouble to his friends. Albrechtsberger, with whom he studied counterpoint, and Salieri, who instructed him in composition, agreed in lamenting this peculiarity of his disposition. He was so wayward that he paid little attention to the subjects of study placed before him; and thus he had to learn by experience what might have been arrived at by a much shorter road, had he chosen to be guided by the judgment of others. He was not singular in acting upon the mistaken notion that rules are the fetters of genius. Rossini was a careless student, and used to annoy his master, the venerable Padre Mattie, as much as Beethoven did Albrechtsberger, trusting for his harmonious effects more to the guidance of his own perceptions than to the *dicta* of theorists. When in reading over his scores, he observed an infringement of some rule, instead of correcting it, he would mark it with a cross, writing on the margin "*Per soddisfazione del pedante.*" "For the satisfaction of the pedants!" The fact is that theorists sometimes attach so much importance to arbitrary rules, that beginners, in the warmth of their imagination, are disgusted by them, and endeavour to avoid all restraint by yielding to no authority, except some inward impulse of their own in matters of taste and propriety. "The best and soundest rules," it has been well observed,—"even those which are susceptible of the most general application—must sometimes yield to the impulse of that high order of genius which can 'snatch a grace beyond the reach of art;' but the frequent disregard of the laws of harmony, as established and taught in the schools, which we find in the works of modern musicians, is in a great measure the fault of those laws themselves, many of which are no longer applicable to the practice of composition. We cannot indeed, conceive anything more absurd than the present system of scholastic discipline, to which the young musician is subject. After his genius has been cramped and confined by a long course of precepts, restrictions, and prohibitions founded on the practice of the seventeenth century, he is told that most of them are antiquated and obsolete, and that there is no longer any occasion to mind them." No wonder, therefore, that a man with the exuberant fancy of Beethoven should have looked with distrust upon a study which tended to cramp his fertile imagination, and we must forgive his boldness and independence, though exercised at the risk of a sacrifice of the first principles of his art.

(To be continued.)

SACRED MUSIC.

BY HENRY C. LUNN.

IN our juvenile days we remember sitting at a window in the house of a serious lady, when an organ in the street began to peal forth the most doleful succession of sounds ever put together by mortal in the most excruciating moments of his grief. Our

involuntary expression of horror at the infliction was, however, immediately succeeded by abject contrition for the utterance of any opinion upon the composition; for we were angrily told that it was "sacred music;" and therefore it was not to be expected that we should derive any agreeable sensation from hearing it. Even in these early days, this frank confession of the mission of "sacred music," appeared strange to us. We had been taught to believe that religion was the solace of man during his brief sojourn upon the earth—that his moments of sadness were made happier, and even his moments of gladness tempered and subdued by the benign influence of his pure and steadfast faith. If, we reasoned with ourselves, religion be really compounded of gratitude and hope, how can this be religious music; for assuredly the only gratitude we felt was when it had ceased, and the only hope it raised was an intense one that we should never hear it again. Years have rolled on since then; but who can ever forget these early impressions; and who, indeed, can even doubt that much of the feeling we have mentioned still lingers with a large number of the middle classes? Are there not many persons who will listen with resignation to compositions containing not even the germ of religious inspiration, provided they are told that the word "sacred" is engraved upon the title-page? And if this class exist, is it not likely that it will be liberally supplied with the article it requires? Weigl, the composer, was once asked why he did not write any more operas: "Ah," he answered, with a sigh, "I am getting old; I have no more ideas; I now only write Church Music." If our readers ask for some specimens of the individuals who are satisfied with the mere outward semblance of a faith, let them search even in the advertisement columns of a daily newspaper, and they will be at once assured of their existence. We select one, which appeared a short time since.

TWO DRAPERS' ASSISTANTS.—WANTED, a Young Man, of Christian principles, to dress fancy millinery and silk windows for a first-class pushing house of business. Apply to —.

It would be curious to enquire how this immaculate young gentleman's Christian principles are to be shown in action. Being fully impressed with the vanity of worldly display and undue love of finery, how can he do violence to his feelings by dressing "fancy millinery and silk windows" with all the colours of the rainbow? Again, is not a "pushing" house of business rather opposed to his avowed principles of peace and good-will to all mankind? Why, this is positively advertising for a martyr.

Whilst serious words can pass for religion, is it to be wondered at that sombre notes should pass for religious music? It may be asserted that sacred music must not be frivolous: certainly not; but that is no reason that it should be depressing. No one can say that Handel's air, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," for instance, is secular; but the music, so far from expressing despondency, is as instinct with the cheerfulness of a pure and confident hope as the words to which it is allied. Composers who have true religion in their hearts, give earnest expression to their faith through the medium of music which shall move the feelings of others in sympathy with their own; but mere writers for the religious market, to be serious must be dull; and, the trick of "sacred" harmonies once learnt, any amount of religious music can be thrown off in any given time,

It has been well said by Mr. G. A. Macfarren, in one of his articles on the "Music of the English Church," that the singing of hymns to the popular tunes of the day, "has been acted upon with wanton extravagance, reckless alike of all effect and of all consequence, save that of giving a passive pleasure to the vulgar crowd, and of gaining a momentary popularity for the local practiser of the system." Here, indeed, is an attempt to escape from the dullness of which we have been speaking; but let us take another extract from the same article before we comment upon this significant fact. "The tune of Miss Ann Catley's Hornpipe, so called because that favorite of the public was wont to dance to it, was originally sung by the same versatile performer in Kane O'Hara's dramatic piece, *The Golden Pippin*, as a song named 'The Guardian Angel;' this name gave it sufficient odour of sanctity for Madan, the popular preacher of the Lock Chapel, to include it in his collection of hymn-tunes, where it first figured under the less pious and far less significant title of 'Helmsley.'" Mr. Macfarren afterwards speaks of the tune called "Rousseau's dream," which was a dance in a comic opera; and "Pilgrims of the Night," an unmitigated French dance tune, as two good specimens of secular airs which have been pressed into the service of the Church. Could more positive proof than this be adduced, that the confiding members of a congregation (however rigid they may be in their uneducated notions upon religious music) will listen most devoutly to secular strains, provided only that they have been properly sanctified by a sacred title.

But it is not by thus desecrating the Church that we would desire to introduce music of a less lugubrious character than we have alluded to in the early part of our remarks. We know that secular tunes are usually inseparably united in the mind with secular ideas; and compositions therefore written to sacred words, should always spring from the mind of one who (like the grand old church composers) can glorify in notes the faith in which he believes.

But our object here is not so much to define what music is admissible for our Protestant Church service, as to speak of that which should be fitly introduced into the family circle. Presuming on the ignorance of the public, a large trade has lately been carried on in what may be called "Sabbath music;" and in the interest of true art, as well as true religion, it is good that this subject should be properly ventilated. We can, of course, have no objection to the works of the true writers for the Church being included in such a selection; but when we find that the majority of these are garbled portions of movements, taken at random from various composers; short pianoforte pieces, with interpolations introduced by the bungling "arrangers;" and airs, which by some sacred title, are made to look religious; with vapid and tedious variations, (so that vanity and devotion may be simultaneously appealed to) we think it high time that a warning voice should be raised against a system so pernicious in its effects. The best specimens of real sacred music lie around us all, and are to be purchased at a price within the reach of every one. Why, then, have recourse to bundles of heterogeneous materials labelled "Sunday Firesides," or "Holy Recreations?" Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Mendelssohn, and many others, have supplied us with works which require no editorial dress-

ing up to fit them for the "firesides" of all who feel that religious words can only be united to religious music by those chosen few, who are impressed with the sacredness of their trust.

But it would be good, if possible, to widen our collection of such music by the occasional introduction of compositions, which, if not named "sacred" by the composer, are no less capable of producing the truest feelings of devotion. We agree with Mr. Macfarren (as we have already said) in his assertion, that the words to which music has been originally set, will intrude themselves upon the mind whenever the notes are heard; but we particularly wish to enforce the fact that instrumental compositions have no such character originally stamped upon them. It is true that certain "social surroundings" may have clung to many of them; but, abstractedly, the character of a composition is determined by the feeling it expresses. Some of the slow movements of Beethoven's Sonatas, many of Bach's works, and several of Mendelssohn's "*Lieder ohne worte*," for instance, are truly religious; in proof of which Gounod has written an "Ave Maria" to Bach's first prelude, in C. The admission of such works as these will tend materially to elevate the tone of Sunday evening music. Our opening remarks as to the absurdity of supposing that anything sacred must be absolutely dull, will, we are sure, be endorsed by all who have true religion in their hearts; and to such only we appeal. The subject has the deepest interest; and, to those who can calmly reflect upon it, the truth must be obvious, that as a man is not necessarily religious because he is serious—so music is not necessarily religious because it is doleful.

HER MAJESTY'S OPERA.

THE general execution of *Faust* at this theatre has scarcely satisfied the admirers of Gounod's music; for although Madlle. Nilsson looks the part of *Margherita* to perfection, there is a coldness in her delivery of much of the impassioned vocal music which renders the part colourless to those who are thoroughly imbued with the characteristics of Goethe's heroine. Signor Ferensì, too, has no claim whatever to be admitted as a first tenor in a lyrical theatre of the highest class: and his assumption of the arduous part of *Faust* is too great a trial to the forbearance of so exacting an audience. The revival of *Il Flauto Magico* has been a most welcome one, since it gave us the opportunity of hearing Madlle. Titiens, as *Pamina*, Madlle. Nilsson, as *Astrijammante*, and Madlle. Sinico as *Papagena*. Madlle. Nilsson, although suffering from indisposition, was encoired in the air "*Va ritorla*," the last movement of which she repeated with such obvious difficulty that no person could have been surprised at her being compelled to omit her second song altogether. When will audiences cease to exact, or singers cease to respond to, a tax so thoroughly absurd and obnoxious? A notice of the performance of *Il Flauto Magico* would be incomplete, were we not to mention the excellent acting and singing of Mr. C. Lyall, as *Monostatos*.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

THE revival of Gounod's opera *Romeo e Giulietta* at this establishment has had the effect of increasing our admiration of Madlle. Patti's *Juliet*, and our wonder at the absurdity of Signor Mario being put forward in a part which he is obviously unable to sing. Respecting the chorus, we have already had a word to say on more than one occasion; and a letter from a correspondent in our present number, shows that we by no means stand alone in our estimate of the slovenly manner in which the